

Message Text

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TAGS: SG, MR, ML, UNDP, PFOR, PDEV, EGEN
SUBJ: SENEGAL RIVER VALLEY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (OMVS);
VISIT OF UNDP ADMINISTRATOR PETERSEN.

1. UNDP ADMINISTRATOR RUDOLPH PETERSEN HAS FOUND EARLY SUPPORT FROM PRESIDENTS OF SENEGAL, MAURITANIA, AND MALI FOR PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN STRUCTURE OF OMVS, ACCORDING TO DAVID MORSE, FORMER ILO DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND NOW LEGAL COUNSEL FOR SENEGAL IN US, WHO ACCCOMPANIED PETERSEN AND UNDP ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA MICHEL DO-KINGUE ON VISITS TO SENEGAL, MAURITANIA, AND MALI. PETERSEN ALSO MET WITH OMVS SECRETARY GENERAL OULD AMAR.

2. SENGHOR, WHO IS THIS YEAR'S OMVS PRESIDENT, AS WELL AS OULD DADDAAH OF MAURITANIA AND MOUSSA TRAORE OF MALI AGREED TO NEED FOR HIGHLY QUALIFIED GENERAL MANAGER OF CALIBER OF PERSONS WHO HAVE RUN RVA AND VOLTA RIVER PROJECTS. GENERAL MANAGER WOULD BE SUPPORTED BY TEAM OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS, AS WELL AS EXPERIENCED FINANCIAL MANAGER. UNDER SUCH PLAN, OFFICE OF SECRETARY GENERAL WOULD BE RESTRUCTURED TO ADHERE CLOSELY TO ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS TASKS. ESTIMATES ARE THAT NEW OMVS STRUCTURE WOULD COST ABOUT \$1 MILLION ANNUALLY. UNDP IS CONSIDERING 5-YEAR COMMITMENT.

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3. IN SENEGAL PETERSEN MET SEVERAL TIMES WITH SENGHOR, WITH PRIME MINISTER DIOUF, AND GOS FINANCE, AGRICULTURE,

AND PLANNING MINISTERS. MORSE TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT PETERSEN WAS PLEASED WITH CONVERSATIONS. HE FELT BOTH SENECALESE AND MAURITANIANS RECOGNIZED NEED FOR HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL MANAGER WHO NEED NOT BE AFRICAN AND PROBABLY SHOULD NOT BE FROM EITHER OF THREE OMVS MEMBER STATES. UNDP REPRESENTATIVE FOR SENEGAL BERTIN BORNA REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT TRAORE OF MALI AGREED WITH POSITIONS TAKEN BY HIS SENECALESE AND MAURITANIAN COUNTERPARTS. ONLY POLITICAL PROBLEM SEEN IN CHOISE WOULD BE MAURITANIAN OPPOSITION TO ANY OFFICIAL WITH CLOSE TIES TO ISRAEL.

4. SENGHOR PLANS INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS -- WITH MALI PRESIDENT TRAORE ON FEB 19 AND PROBABLY WITH OULD DADDAH IN EARLY MARCH IN PREPARATION OF CHANGES IN OMVS STRUCTURE. LARGER OMVS ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING, PROBABLY OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, WOULD FOLLOW LATER IN MARCH.

5. COMMENT: BOTH MORSE AND BORNA, WHO PARTICIPATED IN MEETINGS WITH SENGHOR, ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF RAPID PROGRESS IN OMVS STRENGTHENING PROCESS NOW THAT THREE PRESIDENTS HAVE ACCEPTED PRINCIPLE OF MAJOR CHANGES. OUR VIEW FROM DAKAR IS THAT PETERSEN GSSSGNMKH# HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL.

AND THAT THE UNDP ADMINISTRATOR CONSIDERS OMVS HAS POTENTIAL FOR REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT TASKS MEMBER STATES AND DONORS WISH TO SEE IT UNDERTAKEN.

AGGREY

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

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